

HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

AGENDA

7.30pm

Tuesday
11 September 2007

Havering Town Hall
Main Road, Romford

Members 6: Quorum 3

COUNCILLORS:

Barry Oddy (C)

June Alexander (VC)

Sandra Binion

Keith Wells

Len Long

Melvin Wallace

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HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

11 September 2007

PLEASE NOTE THERE WILL BE A PRE-MEET TO THIS MEETING AT
7.00PM

This report is submitted with the agreement of the Chairman as an urgent matter, pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972

Additional item:

9 WORK PROGRAMME – UPDATE ON TOPIC GROUP ACTIVITY

The following items are renumbered as follows:

10 URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any other item in respect of which the Chairman is of the opinion, by reason of special circumstances which shall be specified in the minutes, that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

NOTES ABOUT THE MEETING

1. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Council is committed to protecting the health and safety of everyone who attends meetings of its Committees.

At the beginning of the meeting, there will be an announcement about what you should do if there is an emergency during its course. **For your own safety and that of others at the meeting, please comply with any instructions given to you about evacuation of the building, or any other safety related matters.**

2. MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS DEVICES

Although mobile phones, pagers and other such devices are an essential part of many people's lives, their use during a meeting can be disruptive and a nuisance. Everyone attending is asked therefore to ensure that any device is switched to silent operation or switched off completely.

3. CONDUCT AT THE MEETING

Although members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the Committee, they have no right to speak at them. Seating for the public is, however, limited and the Council cannot guarantee that everyone who wants to be present in the meeting room can be accommodated. When it is known in advance that there is likely to be particular public interest in an item the Council will endeavour to provide an overspill room in which, by use of television links, members of the public will be able to see and hear most of the proceedings.

The Chairman of the meeting has discretion, however, to invite members of the public to ask questions or to respond to points raised by Members. Those who wish to do that may find it helpful to advise the Committee Officer before the meeting so that the Chairman is aware that someone wishes to ask a question.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THE CHAIRMAN MAY REQUIRE ANYONE WHO ACTS IN A DISRUPTIVE MANNER TO LEAVE THE MEETING AND THAT THE MEETING MAY BE ADJOURNED IF NECESSARY WHILE THAT IS ARRANGED.

If you need to leave the meeting before its end, please remember that others present have the right to listen to the proceedings without disruption. Please leave quietly and do not engage others in conversation until you have left the meeting room.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman will announce details of the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (if any) - receive.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members are invited to declare any interests in any of the items on the agenda at this point of the meeting. Members may still declare an interest in an item at any time prior to the consideration of the matter.

4. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20 June 2007 and to authorise the Chairman to sign them.

5. PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Members are requested to bring their performance information packs for consideration

6. HOUSING PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2007/08 – OUTTURNS TO DATE

Report attached

7. ETHNIC ANALYSIS OF THE LETTING OF COUNCIL HOUSING

Report attached

8. REVIEW OF CHOICE BASED LETTINGS

Report attached

9. URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any other item in respect of which the Chairman is of the opinion, by reason of special circumstances which shall be specified in the minutes, that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

**Cheryl Coppel
Chief Executive**



MEETING	DATE	ITEM
Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee	11 September 2007	6

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SUBJECT: Housing Performance Indicators 2007/08 – outturns to date

WARD: All

SUMMARY

1. This report provides members with an opportunity to review and comment on the in-year outturn performance of the Retained Housing service and Homes in Havering (HiH) against the agreed annual targets.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To note the progress towards achieving the previously agreed 2007/08 targets for the Housing performance indicators.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Background

- 1.1 Members will be aware that, under the Best Value legislation, local authorities are required to monitor the services that they provide against a basket of indicators. This basket has been developed over several years.
- 1.2 It is vital that part of the monitoring of services is to set improvement targets as a way of ensuring that resources are concentrated in the correct areas. These targets form part of the annual Performance Plan, a customer-focussed document that was published on 30 June.

Meeting these future year targets is one of the drivers underlying the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

- 1.3 In addition, since 2002, the Audit Commission has developed a smaller basket of indicators through which to monitor and 'rank' local authorities on a national scale through the CPA. Members will be aware that in February 2007 this authority was assessed as a three-star authority.
- 1.4 This committee received a report at its 20 June 2007 meeting on the methodology in place for monitoring performance against a basket of national and locally defined performance indicators (PIs), and endorsed the targets being set for 2007/08. These were included in the annual Performance Plan that was formally agreed by Council on 18 July 2007.. This report is therefore an opportunity to brief members on performance against these targets for the period April to June 2007.

2. Outturn Performance

- 2.1 Members will understand that whilst successful organisations allow their managers a large degree of autonomy in the way that they deliver their service, it is equally important that there is a robust and efficient mechanism in place for monitoring the effectiveness of such service delivery.
- 2.2 The appendices to this report do not include all the indicators against which Housing Services and HiH report, as some of these are only collected annually.
- 2.3 Members will be particularly interested that the resources invested in void management have continued to bring down the average time from over 100 days in 2004/05 to 20 days by July 2007 (against an agreed target for 2007/08 of 25 days). This has had the effect of making homes available for re-let quicker, and avoiding loss of rent whilst properties stand empty.
- 2.4 Members will also wish to note the results of the June HiH tenant survey where 80% of those asked were satisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord, and 72% were satisfied with the opportunities that they have been given to participate in management and decision making within the services provided by their landlord. Although a different methodology was used to that in 2006, the results do show a continuing improvement in tenant perceptions and are now amongst the best within London.

3. Future Years

- 3.1 As the performance reported here is only the first four months of 2007/08, we do not propose to change either the current year or the future years forecasts. This position will be kept under review and any such changes will be included in the next report to this committee.

- 3.2 The Retained Service will ensure that the resources necessary to either achieve or exceed these targets will be included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy, currently being developed.
- 3.3 As agreed at the 29 March meeting of this committee, Homes in Havering and the Retained Housing service will continue to report on the delivery of these improvement targets on a quarterly basis.

4. Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)

- 4.1 At the June meeting, this committee was advised that, as a level 2 Service within CPA, the Housing Service Block was given a weighted assessment against a basket of PIs and relevant service assessments. The assessment framework was published in August and the Housing Block is currently forecast to achieve an overall rating of 3 – ‘a service that consistently delivers above minimum requirements to users’. Members will wish to note the improvement from a score of 1 (‘a service that does not deliver minimum requirements for users’) in 2005 and 2 in February 2007.

5. Appendices

- 5.1 Appendix A provides details of the PIs from the Retained Service, and B those where the reporting responsibility lies with HiH.. These tables show the 2006/07 outturns, the 2007/08 target, the performance to July 2007, and any relevant CPA thresholds, the best and worst quartiles for London for 2005/06 as defined by the Audit Commission, and the 2008/09 and 2009/10 improvement targets.

Financial Implications and risks:

Only the full year outturn figures are subject to possible external audit and, therefore, these 1st Quarter figures should be treated as for monitoring purposes only.

Targets for future years will need to be delivered within existing budgets which may require the reprioritisation of resources. Where this is not possible funding will need to be addressed through the MTFs process or targets revised as appropriate.

Legal Implications and risks:

There is no legal requirement for this report, although the collection and reporting of statutory PIs through the annual performance plan is part of the current Best Value legislation. However, regular performance reporting to the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee was agreed and minuted at the 29 March meeting.

Human Resources Implications and risks:

None directly

Equalities and Social Inclusion Implications and risks:

Under the Key Lines of Enquiry (a set of definitions developed by the Audit Commission on what constitutes a high performing Housing Service), the authority is expected to demonstrate that all tenants and applicants for housing have equal access to its services. Publishing performance data and the targets that we set ourselves in a public document such as the Performance Plan (against which the performance here is being reported) allows service users to see the standards that we have set ourselves and how we are achieving them.

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CHERYL COPPELL
Chief Executive

Background Papers List

Annual Performance Plan, published June 2007

Data have been extracted from the internal monthly monitoring reports produced by the Retained Service and Homes in Havering.

BVPIs and Strategic LPIs : Housing and Environmental Health

BVPI Code	BVPI / LPI	Outturn 2006/07	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Outturn to July	2006 CPA Thresholds		2005/06 London Quartiles		2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	Where used ¹
					Upper	Lower	Best	Worst			
BVPI 66a	Local authority rent collection and arrears: proportion of rent collected (Mardyke only)	94.3%	94.5%	92.3%	98.2%	96.18%	97.62%	96.13%	Anticipated stock transfer to Old Ford		CPA PP
BVPI 66b	The number of local authority tenants with more than seven weeks of (gross) arrears as a percentage of the total number of council tenants (Mardyke only)	7.40%	7.7%	7.68%	Not applicable	Not applicable	6.92%	13.40%	-	-	PP
BVPI 66c	Percentage of local authority tenants in arrears who have had Notices Seeking Possession served (Mardyke only)	17.75%	17%	5.47%	Not applicable	Not applicable	21.93%	32.73%	-	-	PP
BVPI 66d	Percentage of local authority tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears (Mardyke only)	1.8%	1.5%	0.44%	Not applicable	Not applicable	0.27%	0.70%	-	-	PP
BVPI 74a	The satisfaction of tenants of council housing with the overall service provided by their landlord	76% ± 3.03%	80%	80%	92.5%	84.1%	72.5%	63.5%	81%	82%	CPA PP
BVPI 74b	The satisfaction of tenants of council housing with the overall service provided by their landlord with results further broken down by b)black and minority ethnic tenants	68% ± 18.29%	70%	87%	Not applicable	Not applicable	70.5%	59.8%	71%	72%	PP
BVPI 74c	The satisfaction of tenants of council housing with the overall service provided by their landlord with results further broken down by c)non black and minority ethnic tenants	76% ± 3.12%	80%	80%	Not applicable	Not applicable	74%	65%	81%	82%	PP
BVPI 75a	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord	61% ± 3.48%	68%	72%	77.5%	68.2%	62%	52.8%	69%	70%	PP

Key: CPA: Used in CPA

PP : Reported in annual Performance Plan

BVPI Code	BVPI / LPI	Outturn 2006/07	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Outturn to July	2006 CPA Thresholds		2005/06 London Quartiles		2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	Where used ¹
					Upper	Lower	Best	Worst			
BVPI 75b	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord with results further broken down by b)black and minority ethnic tenants	54% ± 19.16%	56%	68%	Not applicable	Not applicable	64.3%	52%	57%	58%	PP
BVPI 75c	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord with results further broken down by c)non black and minority ethnic tenants	60% ± 3.6%	68.5%	73%	Not applicable	Not applicable	62.3%	52.3%	69%	70%	PP
BVPI 106	Percentage of new houses built on brownfield sites	94.49%	100%	100%	93%	Not set	100%	100%	100%	100%	CPA PP
BVPI 184a	The proportion of LA homes which were non-decent at the year start (Mardyke only)	April 2006 = 32%	April 2007 = 32%	32%	21%	53%	April 2006 = 25%	April 2006 = 55%	Anticipated stock transfer to Old Ford		CPA
BVPI 184b	The percentage change in proportion of non-decent homes (Mardyke only)	0%	0%	0%	+23.8%	+3.5%	+23.8%	+6.9%	Anticipated stock transfer to Old Ford		CPA
BVPI 202	The number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area of the authority	1 (from 2004/05 assessment)	1	Survey to be done	Not applicable	Not applicable	1	7	1	1	PP
BVPI 213	Households who considered themselves as homeless, who approached the local housing Authority's housing advice service(s), and for whom housing advice casework intervention resolved their situation, per 1,000 households.	1	1	0.06	4	1	6	2	1	1	PP

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BVPI Code	BVPI / LPI	Outturn 2006/07	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Outturn to July	2006 CPA Thresholds		2005/06 London Quartiles		2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	Where used ¹
					Upper	Lower	Best	Worst			
BVPI 225.2	Is there within the local authority area a minimum of 1 refuge place per ten thousand population?	No	No	No	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes	Yes	CPA PP
BVPI 225.7	Has the local authority developed, launched and promoted a 'sanctuary' type scheme to enable victims to remain in their own home, where they choose to do so and where safety can be guaranteed?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes	Yes	CPA PP
BVPI 225.9	Does the council's tenancy agreement have a specific clause stating that perpetration of domestic violence by a tenant can be considered grounds for eviction?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes	Yes	CPA PP
HIP-HSSA	Percentage of private sector homes vacant for more than 6 months	1.47%	1%	1.04%	0.74%	0%	0.79%	1.68%	1%	1%	CPA PP
SP KPI 1	Service user who are supported to establish and maintain independent	99.3%	90%	100%	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not available	Not available	90%	90%	
SP KPI 2	Service Users who have moved on in a planned way from temporary living arrangements	100%	85%	83%	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not available	Not available	85%	85%	
SPI 1	Supporting People funded Service Availability % 2006/07	99.9%	95%	100%	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not available	Not available	95%	95%	
SPI 2	Supporting People funded Service Utilisation % 2006/07	96.2%	95%	95%	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not available	Not available	95%	95%	
LPI 1	Percentage of tenants (excl those receiving Housing Benefit) paying rent and helpline charges by Standing Order or Direct Debit (Mardyke only)	20%	25%	21%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Anticipated stock transfer to Old Ford		
LPI 20	% of completed ASB cases resolved without need for legal action – Mardyke only	100%	93%	100%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Anticipated stock transfer to Old Ford		
LPI 22	% of completed ASB cases resolved through enforcement – Mardyke only	0%	1.0%	0%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Anticipated stock transfer to Old Ford		

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BVPI Code	BVPI / LPI	Outturn 2006/07	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Outturn to July	2006 CPA Thresholds		2005/06 London Quartiles		2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	Where used ¹
					Upper	Lower	Best	Worst			
LPI 22a	% of completed ASB cases resolved through injunction – Mardyke only	0%	1.5%	0%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Anticipated stock transfer to Old Ford		
LPI 22b	% of completed ASB cases resolved through eviction – Mardyke only	0%	1.5%	0%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Anticipated stock transfer to Old Ford		
LPI 22c	% of completed ASB cases resolved through possession order – Mardyke only	0%	0.5%	0%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Anticipated stock transfer to Old Ford		
LPI 22d	% of completed ASB cases resolved through ASBO – Mardyke only	0%	1.5%	0%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Anticipated stock transfer to Old Ford		
LPI 22e	% of completed ASB cases resolved through demotion – Mardyke only	0%	0.5%	0%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Anticipated stock transfer to Old Ford		
LPI 22f	% of completed ASB cases resolved through other housing intervention – Mardyke only	0%	2.0%	0%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Anticipated stock transfer to Old Ford		
LPI 26 (BV8)	Combined Invoice performance for Housing & Health for late payments (cumulative)	2%	2%	1.51%	Not applicable	Not applicable	9.78%	15.31%	2%	2%	
LPI 29	Average number of calendar days that void properties are with lettings team	15 days	14 days	7 days	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not available	Not available	13 days	12 days	
LPI 30	Percentage of applications processed in 28 working days	Not collected	80%	92.64%	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not available	Not available	83%	85%	PP
LPI 31	Length of time that the oldest application has been in the backlog	Not collected	28 days	13 days	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not available	Not available	28 days	28 days	PP
LPI 32	Percentage of homeless decisions in 33 calendar days	75%	85%	95%	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not available	Not available	87%	90%	PP

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BVPI Code	BVPI / LPI	Outturn 2006/07	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Outturn to July	2006 CPA Thresholds		2005/06 London Quartiles		2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	Where used ¹
					Upper	Lower	Best	Worst			
LPI 33	Number of households in temporary accommodation	576	700	586	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not available	Not available	550	395	
LPI 34	Proportion (percentage) of reviews carried out in 56 days (ref DCLG homelessness directive)	85%	87%	100%	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not available	Not available	90%	90%	
LPI 35	The percentage of households in temporary accommodation as a percentage of the number at 31 December 2004	72.82%%	88.50%	74.08%	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not available	Not available	69.53%	49.99%	
LPI 36	Number of new affordable homes let or sold in the financial year	Not available	169	31	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not available	Not available	220	250	PP
LPI 37	Number of new affordable homes let or sold in the financial year as a percentage of the target	100%	100%	18.34%	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not available	Not available	100%	100%	
LPI 38	Average length of time from homelessness acceptance of duty or acceptance on review to PSL let	41 days	25 days	22 days	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not available	Not available	25 days	25 days	
LPI 39	Percentage of capital spend on Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)	90%	95%	26.63%	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not available	Not available	98%	98%	
LPI 40	Percentage of capital spend on private sector renewal	67%	90%	31.65%	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not available	Not available	95%	98%	

ll figures are cumulative unless otherwise stated.

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BVPIs and Strategic LPIs : Homes in Havering

BVPI Code	BVPI / LPI	Outturn 2006/07	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Outturn to July	2006 CPA Thresholds		2005/06 London Quartiles		2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	Where used ¹
					Upper	Lower	Best	Worst			
BVPI 63	Energy efficiency – the average SAP rating of local authority owned dwellings	69.2	70	70.6	65	57	69	64	75.5	78	CPA PP
BVPI 66a	Local authority rent collection and arrears: proportion of rent collected (excl Mardyke)	97.9%	98.0%	96.2%	98.2%	96.18%	97.62%	96.13%	98.1%	98.2%	CPA PP
BVPI 66b	The number of local authority tenants with more than seven weeks of (gross) arrears as a percentage of the total number of council tenants (excl Mardyke)	3.86%	3.80%	2.85%	Not applicable	Not applicable	6.92%	13.40%	3.79%	3.78%	PP
BVPI 66c	Percentage of local authority tenants in arrears who have had Notices Seeking Possession served (excl Mardyke)	15.08%	16.5%	4.61%	Not applicable	Not applicable	21.93%	32.73%	16.4%	16.3%	PP
BVPI 66d	Percentage of local authority tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears (excl Mardyke)	0.05%	0.07%	0.03%	Not applicable	Not applicable	0.27%	0.70%	0.103%	0.102%	PP
BVPI 184a	The proportion of LA homes which were non-decent at the year start	April 2006 = 32%	April 2007 = 32%	29.6%	21%	53%	April 2006 = 25%	April 2006 = 55%	April 2008 = 32%	April 2009 = 24%	CPA PP
BVPI 184b	The percentage change in proportion of non-decent	2.61%	0%	0.23%	+23.8%	+3.5%	+23.8%	+6.9%	0%	+25%	CPA PP
BVPI 212	Average time taken to re-let council dwellings (in calendar days)	26 days	25 days	20 days	29 days	51 days	29 days	37 days	24 days	23 days	CPA PP
LPI 1	Percentage of tenants (excl those receiving Housing Benefit) paying rent and helpline charges by Standing Order or Direct Debit (excl Mardyke)	51%	25% (also see Mardyke)	22%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	56%	57%	PP

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BVPI Code	BVPI / LPI	Outturn 2006/07	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Outturn to July	2006 CPA Thresholds		2005/06 London Quartiles		2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	Where used ¹
					Upper	Lower	Best	Worst			
LPI 11a	% of Priority 1 (24-hour completion) repairs completed in time (Morrison contract only)	98.9%	98%	99.4%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	98%	98%	PP
LPI 11b	% of Priority 2 (5 working days) repairs completed in time (Morrison contract only)	96.1%	95%	96.6%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	95%	95%	PP
LPI 11c	% of Priority 3 (20 working days) repairs completed in time (Morrison contract only)	98.1%	95%	99.0%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	95%	95%	PP
LPI 12	% of Emergency Orders (EO - 24-hour completion) repairs done by target completion date (Morrison contract only)	100%	100%	99.7%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	98.6%	98.7%	
LPI 13	% of all repairs done by target completion date (Morrison contract only)	97.6%	97.7%	98.2%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	95.1%	95.2%	
LPI 14a	% of repairs raised as an emergency – EOs only (Morrison contract only)	6.2%	5.2%	7.4%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	5.2%	5.2%	
LPI 14b	% of repairs raised by the contact centre as an emergency – Priority 1 only (Morrison contract only)	20.5%	19.5%	20.8%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 15	% of repairs raised as a non-emergency – Priority 2 & 3 (Morrison contract only)	73.3%	75.3%	71.8%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 16	% of Pre-inspections completed (Morrison contract only) – objective to be below target	7.5%	8%	6.4%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	7.8%	7.6%	
LPI 17a	% of Post-inspections completed (Morrison contract only) objective to be above target	10.0%	12%	10.7%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	13%	14%	

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BVPI Code	BVPI / LPI	Outturn 2006/07	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Outturn to July	2006 CPA Thresholds		2005/06 London Quartiles		2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	Where used ¹
					Upper	Lower	Best	Worst			
LPI 18a	Customer satisfaction (Morrison contract only) – all tenants; non-cumulative	96.5%	98%	96.4% ±3.8%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	98.1%	98.2%	PP
LPI 19	% of repair orders with card left due to no access (as a % of jobs raised in the month)	2.9%	3.0%	2.1%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 20	% of completed ASB cases resolved through prevention and early intervention – Monthly figures, not cumulative	100%	At least 92.5%	98.5% (= 128)	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	93.1%	93.2%	
LPI 22	% of ASB cases resolved through enforcement action, of which LPI 22a – f. Monthly figures, not cumulative	0%	No more than 7.5%	1.5% (= 2)	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not set	Target not set	
LPI 22a	% of completed ASB cases resolved through injunction - Monthly figures, not cumulative	0%	No more than 1.5%	0%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not set	Target not set	
LPI 22b	% of completed ASB cases resolved through eviction - Monthly figures, not cumulative	0%	No more than 1.0%	0%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not set	Target not set	
LPI 22c	% of completed ASB cases resolved through possession order - Monthly figures, not cumulative	New indicator	No more than 0.5%	0%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not set	Target not set	
LPI 22d	% of completed ASB resolved through ASBO - Monthly figures, not cumulative	New indicator	No more than 1.0%	0%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not set	Target not set	
LPI 22e	% of completed ASB cases resolved through demotion - Monthly figures, not cumulative	New indicator	No more than 1.5%	0%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not set	Target not set	
	% of completed ASB cases resolved through NOSP's - Monthly figures, not cumulative	New indicator	Target not set	0%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not set	Target not set	

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					Upper	Lower	Best	Worst			
LPI 22f	% of completed ASB cases resolved through other housing intervention - Monthly figures, not cumulative	New indicator	No more than 2.0%	1.5% (=2)	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not set	Target not set	
LPI 23a	Average number of calendar days for void notification to contractor (excl major works)	4 days	3 days	0	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	3 days	3 days	
LPI 23c	Average number of calendar days for void notification to lettings (all voids)	2 days	2 days	1 day	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	1 day	1 day	
LPI 24	Percentage of respondents satisfied or very satisfied with the way HiH handled their ASB case	New indicator	95%	59% ±8.9%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 25	Percentage of respondents satisfied or very satisfied with the outcome of their ASB case	New indicator	80%	48% ±15.6%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 26	Percentage of harassment/hate crime investigations started within 1 working day of being reported	New indicator	100%	100%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 27a	% of Priority 1 (24-working hour completion) repairs done by target completion date (measured from when repair is reported to HiH)	96.3%	97%	96.9%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 27b	% of Priority 2 (5 working days) repairs done by target completion date (measured from when repair is reported to HiH)	85.9%	90%	90.6%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 27c	% of Priority 3 (20 working days) repairs done by target completion date (measured from when repair is reported to HiH)	87.9%	95%	89.8%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	

Key: CPA: Used in CPA

PP : Reported in annual Performance Plan

BVPI Code	BVPI / LPI	Outturn 2006/07	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Outturn to July	2006 CPA Thresholds		2005/06 London Quartiles		2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	Where used ¹
					Upper	Lower	Best	Worst			
LPI 27d	% of EO (Emergency Out of Hours - 24-hour completion) repairs done by target completion date (measured from when repair is reported to HiH)	99.0%	99.1%	99.5%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 28	% of (all) repairs done by target completion date (measured from when repair is reported to HiH)	89.7%	94%	92.8%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 29a	% of hate crime and racist graffiti removed within 1 working day of being reported –non cumulative	New indicator	96%	100% (8 cases)	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 29b	% of other graffiti removed within 3 working days of it being reported –non cumulative	New indicator	95%	97% (183 cases)	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 30	% of calls answered within 15 seconds at the HiH Contact Centre	New indicator	90%	94%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 31	% of HiH properties with a Landlord gas safety certificate issued in the last 12 months – non cumulative	March 07 =99.1%	99.2%	99.4%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 32a	Tenant satisfaction with the quality of major works	New indicator	80%	92% 49 resp	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 32b	Tenant satisfaction with the quality of major works (BME tenants)	New indicator	75%	1 resp	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	

Key: CPA: Used in CPA

PP : Reported in annual Performance Plan

BVPI Code	BVPI / LPI	Outturn 2006/07	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Outturn to July	2006 CPA Thresholds		2005/06 London Quartiles		2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	Where used ¹
					Upper	Lower	Best	Worst			
LPI 32c	Tenant satisfaction with the quality of major works (with disabilities)	New indicator	80%	94% 18 resp	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 33a	Decent Homes: Capital expenditure against programme	New indicator	1 st Qt: £804k Full year: £14,004k	Qtr 1: £804k	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 34	Customer satisfaction with repair (Interserve contract only); non-cumulative	New indicator	98%	94% ±5.2%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 35	Tenant satisfaction with the quality of disabled adaptations	New indicator	95%	96.7% ±3.8%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 36	RTB2s issued within statutory timescale; non-cumulative	New indicator	98%	100%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 38	% of S125s issued within statutory timescales; non-cumulative	New indicator	98%	100%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
LPI 40	Service charge arrears against target	New indicator	1 st Qtr: £1,026,870 Full year: £2,566,178	Qt 1: £898,685	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	

Key: CPA: Used in CPA

PP : Reported in annual Performance Plan

LPI 41	% of leaseholders paying by direct debit	New indicator	20%	15%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	
BVPI Code	BVPI / LPI	Outturn 2006/07	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Outturn to July	2006 CPA Thresholds		2005/06 London Quartiles		2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target	Where used¹
					Upper	Lower	Best	Worst			
LPI 42	Percentage of residents taking part in key tenant participation activities that are BME	New indicator	At least 3%	Sounding Board: 8.4% CHGs: 4.3%	Not applicable	No applicable	Not available	Not available	Target not yet set	Target not yet set	

All figures are cumulative unless otherwise stated

Note: Homes in Havering wishes to measure the repairs performance from the point the resident calls them, and is in the process of negotiating with the Contractor to reduce the time taken for each repair priority. These reduced timescales will allow HiH to undertake the allocation of work and pre-inspections and therefore enable them to set realistic targets for LPIs 27 and 28. These improvements will be then be published.



MEETING	DATE	ITEM
Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee	11 September 2007	7

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SUBJECT: Ethnic Analysis of the Letting of Council Housing

WARD: ALL

SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report gives a detailed breakdown of how representative the ethnic pattern of council property lettings is when compared with black and minority ethnic, BME, community representation in the borough and on the housing register for the period 2004/05 to quarter 1 2007/08.
- 1.2 The analysis shows that people from a black and minority ethnic background make up a greater proportion of those registered with the Council for housing than their numbers in the Havering population would suggest. That is, although the latest population estimates suggest Havering has a 6.6% BME population, BME people make up some 11.7% of the Housing Register.
- 1.3 The analysis shows that the proportion of lettings in 2006/07, representing the latest full year's worth of data, to people from Asian backgrounds or of 'mixed or other' backgrounds are proportionate to their numbers on the Housing Register, while those from a Black background have received a slightly lower proportion of lettings than would be expected.
- 1.4 Quarter 1 data for 2007/08 have also been analysed, although as this analysis is based on only 162 lettings, the findings should only be considered indicative of this year's position. In the first quarter of this year, it appears that all BME groups are yet to receive lettings at a level predicted by their proportion on the Housing Register. Further analysis, however, reveals that the current balance of housing need across the housing need bands – A to E – sees relatively more white applicants in the higher bands of A and B than BME residents.

1.5 The report goes on to discuss these issues in greater detail.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the analysis in this report.
- 2.2 That the Committee notes that consultation with the BME Standing Conference on Homelessness and Housing Issues – the consultative forum with the borough’s community and faith groups – has prioritised the need to promote access to social housing among BME groups and that this has been included in the Interim Housing Strategy 2007-08.
- 2.3 That the Committee notes that further analysis of the pattern of housing need across the different Black and Minority Ethnic groups is required.
- 2.4 That the findings of this further analysis be included in future ethnic monitoring of lettings reports presented to the Committee.

REPORT DETAIL

- 3.1 The Council’s Interim Housing Strategy 2007 – 2008 prioritises the monitoring the ethnic breakdown of council lettings as part of the Council’s pro-active approach to promoting the equality of access to housing in the borough.
- 3.2 The table below compares the percentage of the different ethnic groups in Havering’s population and on the housing register with the lettings received. Data since 2004-05 are presented.

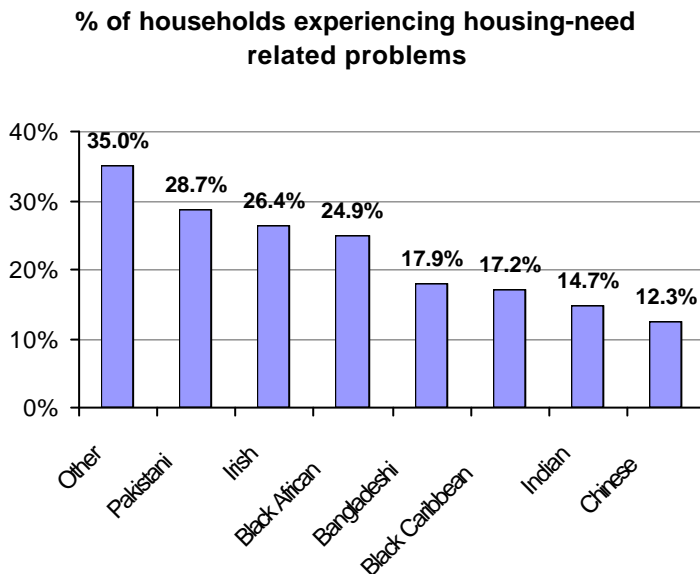
Table 1: Ethnic Breakdown of the Housing Register and Lettings

Ethnicity	All residents – Census 2001	All residents – mid-year estimate 2003	Housing register at 1 April 2007	Lettings				
				2004/05 new apps	2004/05 tr’sfers	2005/06 all lettings	2006/07 all lettings	2007/08 – qtr 1 all lettings
White	95.2%	93.4%	88.3%	90.8%	97.3%	89.8%	90.5%	93.2%
Black	1.4%	2.0%	4.6%	3.2%	1.8%	4.1%	2.3%	3.1%
Asian	1.8%	2.5%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%	1.3%	1.2%	0.6%
Mixed or other	1.6%	2.0%	6.0%	4.9%	0.9%	4.8%	6.0%	3.1%
Total BME	4.8%	6.6%	11.7%	9.2%	2.7%	10.2%	9.5%	6.8%
Excludes the small number of instances where ethnicity is not known								

- 3.3 The analysis shows that the proportion of people from a black and minority ethnic background make up a far greater number of those registered with the Council for housing than their numbers in the Havering population would suggest. That is, although the latest population estimates suggest Havering has a 6.6% BME population, BME people make up some 11.7% of the Housing Register.

- 3.4 In broad terms, this is perhaps to be expected given the findings of the BME Housing Needs Study conducted in 2006. The graph below gives the proportion of the principal BME groups in Havering experiencing housing-needs related problems. This should be compared against a figure of less than 10% of the whole population experiencing such problems.

Figure 1: Ethnic Breakdown of Experience of Housing-Needs Related Problems



- 3.5 It is interesting to note from Table 1 above, that while black and 'mixed or other' groups appear over-represented on the Housing Register, residents of Asian origin appear to make up a lower proportion of the Register. While the BME Housing Needs Study found high numbers of those from Asian backgrounds favouring home ownership, the Council and its partner, Homes in Havering need to maintain access to the Housing Register and pro-actively promote choice-based lettings. This work is currently being pursued in consultation with the BME Standing Conference on Homelessness and Housing Issues. Priorities for the Council and partners have been set by this consultative body and included in the Interim Housing Strategy 2007-08 – see Appendix 1 of this report for an extract from the Housing Strategy giving the BME action plan.

Ethnic analysis of lettings

- 3.6 The analysis in Table 1 shows that the proportion of lettings in 2006/07 to people from BME groups is broadly in line with their numbers on the Housing Register, notably:
- 1.0% of those on the Register are of Asian origin, with this group receiving 1.2% of all lettings in 2006/07
 - those from an 'other' or 'mixed' ethnic background make up some 6.0% of the Housing Register, and they received 6.0% of all lettings in 2006/07

- however, those from a Black background received a lower than predicted proportion of lettings – 2.3% compared with 4.6% share of the Housing Register.

3.7 Quarter 1 data for 2007/08 have also been analysed. However, this analysis is based on only 162 lettings and so must be treated as indicative at this stage of the likely pattern in 2007/08 overall. Conclusions are hard to draw. In quarter 1 of this year, it appears that all BME groups have yet to receive their predicted share of lettings:

- the proportion of black residents taking up a letting is slightly less than their share of the Housing Register – 3.1% of lettings compared with making up 4.6% of the Housing Register
- those of an Asian background have taken up lettings broadly in proportion to their presence on the Register – 0.6% of lettings, set against making up 1.0% of the Housing Register
- those from an ‘other’ or ‘mixed’ background have received just 3.1% of lettings, compared with making up 6.0% of the Register.

Relative need represented on the Housing Register by ethnicity

3.8 Further analysis has been conducted to look at the current balance of need represented on the Housing Register between those from different ethnic backgrounds. This analysis is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Ethnic Breakdown of the Housing Need represented on the Housing Register

	Bands A and B	Band C	Bands D and E
White	91.4%	85.9%	84.5%
Black	1.2%	4.9%	6.3%
Asian	1.6%	1.5%	1.5%
Mixed or other	5.8%	7.7%	7.7%
Total BME	8.6%	14.1%	15.5%

3.9 Table 2 reveals that BME applicants make a smaller proportion of Bands A and B – the highest priority bands – than they do the other bands. While many lettings are made to those in Bands C and below, the Choice-Based Lettings, CBL, is designed to prioritise applicants bidding for properties from Band A through to E. Therefore, given the current balance of need, it is to be expected that white applicants will receive a slightly higher proportion of bids.

3.10 Further analysis of this is recommended, although officers’ initial views are:

- as one of the key factors for receiving a higher priority is medical need, given the high proportion of older residents in the borough, and current predominance of white people in this age group, this may account for much of the observed pattern of housing need, and

- 'emergency transfers' from an existing council property carry a Band A priority. Thus, as BME groups are estimated to make up only 3% of current tenants, there may be a higher proportion of white tenants receiving a higher banding for this reason.

3.11 The ethnic balance across the bands will be explored in greater detail. The findings will be reported back to a future Committee meeting.

Trends over time

3.12 Given the relatively small actual numbers of people on the Housing Register from a BME background – 357 at 1 April 2007 – and the limited number of council lets each year, at around 750, it is perhaps best to look at the picture over time.

3.13 It should be noted that from April 2005, the Council's revised Lettings Policy made no distinction between applicants and transfers, hence the reason for the different presentation of the data from 2005/06 onwards. Table 1 shows that each year since 2004/05 (if applicants rather than transfers that year are considered) BME groups have received around 10% of all lettings. This is in excess of their numbers in the general Havering population and only very marginally below their share of the Housing Register. In any one year, given the small numbers involved, it is to be expected that there will be slight fluctuations. In 2006/07, those from a Black background received slightly fewer lettings than predicted, while the other groups received lettings in proportion to their share of the Register.

Pro-actively promoting access to social housing in the borough

3.14 The Council's Choice-Based Lettings, CBL, service used the East London Lettings Company, ELLC, approach and so benefits from the multi-lingual ELLC website. In addition, the Council's CBL booklet includes a language panel for applicants to use to request information in other formats.

3.15 The Council has recently reviewed its CBL service, finding the need to further publicise and explain the scheme a main priority. The findings of the CBL have been discussed with community groups attending the Council's BME Standing Conference on Homelessness and Housing Advice. The Standing Conference has asked the Council to (a) include full information in the information for BME groups currently in production, and (b) bring forward the planned out-reach sessions to be carried out by the Housing Advice and Homelessness Team with the borough's community and faith groups; these will now start later this year.

4. Financial Implications and risks

4.1 The resources required for promoting the CBL service and carrying out out-reach sessions are being funded from the Homelessness Prevention Grant the Council receives from the Communities and Local Government department along with revenue funding already ear-marked for CBL.

- 4.2 The CBL magazine includes the offer of translation facilities should any applicant require it, with a contact telephone number. This is also included on the East London Letting Company, ELLC, website.

5. Legal Implications and risks

- 5.1 It is illegal for the Council to discriminate either directly or indirectly on the grounds of race or ethnicity, among other factors.
- 5.2 It is crucial that Council keeps under regular review the success or otherwise of the different ethnic groups in receiving an offer of council accommodation and understands why there is any imbalance in the lettings figures compared with the proportion on the Housing Register. While individual quarterly figures will show variations, any long term unjustified discrepancy would be a matter of concern. The data should assist in safeguarding the authority from the risk of legal challenge from an applicant who feels the Council's lettings policies and/or practices led them not to receive a service they would have otherwise received were they of another ethnic background.

6. Human Resources Implications and risks

- 6.1 None arising directly from this report.

7. ICT Implications and risks

- 7.1 None arising directly from this report.

8. Reasons for the decision

- 8.1 The recommendations arise directly from the need to promote access to social housing in the borough among Havering's BME groups.

9. Alternative options considered

- 9.1 None.

10. Equalities and Social Inclusion implications and risks

- 10.1 The body of report outlines in detail the need to monitor and investigate the pattern of lettings to the different BME to ensure that all Havering's communities have access to the type and size of housing they require.

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Chief

Appendix 1 – extract from the Interim Housing Strategy 2007-08

Recommendations	ACTIONS	Service section responsible	Deadlines for completion	Expected outcomes	Monitoring arrangements
<p>Improve awareness of, and accessibility to, all housing services by ensuring service information is available as required in other languages and formats</p>	<p>1. Each team to internally audit key service information in the public domain (Council housing application forms, grant application forms, PSL landlord application forms, leaflets, policies, booklets, Council website) to check it is clear to customers that it can be made available in other languages and formats as required</p>	<p>All section managers (Lettings, Housing Advice & Homelessness, Supported Housing, Private Sector Grants, Private Sector Leased Accommodation and Housing Development)</p>	<p>2007/08</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information on all housing services will be much better distributed and communicated to the BME public if it is all available in alternative languages 	<p>Regularly review action plan at monthly Housing and Environmental Health Management Team, H&EHMT, meetings</p> <p>Review action plan each quarter via the BME Standing Conference on Housing and Homelessness</p>
	<p>2. Update and increase use of all forms of media (Council's website, information leaflets, newspaper advertising, local newsletter advertising, posters, mail outs) to advertise the availability of information in other languages and formats as required</p>	<p>All section managers</p>	<p>2007/08</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uptake of every service by the BME community will improve 	<p>Monthly H&EHMT meetings</p> <p>Quarterly BME Standing Conference meetings</p>

<p>3. Draw up an outreach work schedule for a team of Housing Services staff to visit local BME community and faith groups over the next 18 months, in partnership with Homes in Havering</p>	<p>All section managers</p>	<p>Complete visiting schedule – end of 2007/08</p> <p>Outreach work to be complete - end of 2008/09</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To increase awareness among minority ethnic groups 	<p>Monthly H&EHMT meetings</p> <p>Quarterly BME Standing Conference meetings</p>
<p>4. All front-line Housing Services and Homes in Havering staff to positively promote interpretation and translation services to clients (verbally in person, over the telephone and in all correspondence)</p>	<p>All section managers</p>	<p>2007/08</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To overcome any barriers that may be preventing access to the range of housing services ▪ The minority ethnic public should be clear that they are free of charge, available in any language other than English if needed 	<p>Monthly H&EHMT meetings</p> <p>Quarterly BME Standing Conference meetings</p>

Recommendations	ACTIONS	Service section responsible	Deadlines for completion	Expected outcomes	Monitoring arrangements
Build up the confidence of the BME Community in the Council (Corporate Issue)	1. The Housing Service must continue to play an active role in the council's BME Officer Forum that was formed in 2006. It is vital that a Housing Service representative attends and takes full ownership of the work that arises from the BME Officer Forum, the aim of which relates directly to this recommendation	Head of Housing and Environmental Health	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For the BME community to feel they will receive the same levels of service provision and support as the wider Havering community but that their different needs will be met. 	<p>Monthly H&EHMT meetings</p> <p>Quarterly BME Standing Conference meetings</p>
	2. Use the BME Officer Forum to raise non-housing issues that affect the BME community but that can only be addressed corporately like experiences and incidences of racism in Romford	All service managers to be aware that they can report issues to the BME Officer Forum Housing representative	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For non-housing issues that come to the attention of the Housing Service to be tackled corporately by the Council 	<p>Monthly H&EHMT meetings</p> <p>Quarterly BME Standing Conference meetings</p>
	3. In partnership with Homes in Havering, increase awareness of the buildings owned by the Housing Service that can be used as community meeting spaces for BME community groups – feed this into the BME Officer Forum work	Homes in Havering Tenant Participation team	2007/08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To provide buildings for local BME community & faith groups to meet and be accessible to the public. 	<p>Monthly H&EHMT meetings</p> <p>Quarterly BME Standing Conference meetings</p>

4. Contribute to discussions about how the council can facilitate new buildings of worship for people from different faiths that currently lack them. Feed this issue into the BME Officer Forum work	All section managers	2007/08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To play a role in helping local faith groups find/build new permanent places of worship. 	<p>Report to the BME Officer Forum</p> <p>Report to the BME Network Forum</p>
5. Carry out an audit of frontline BME housing staff - Arrange via Human Resources	Housing Strategy	2008/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that front-line staff are representative of service users 	<p>Sustainable Communities Equalities Group</p> <p>Monthly H&EHMT meetings</p> <p>Quarterly BME Standing Conference meetings</p>



MEETING	DATE	ITEM
Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee	11 September 2007	8

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SUBJECT: Review of Choice-based Lettings

WARD: ALL

SUMMARY

Members gave approval to introduce a choice-based lettings scheme, CBL, for the letting of local authority housing in Havering and housing association properties to which the Council has nomination rights, three years ago. Consequently, a totally revised lettings Policy came into force in April 2005, with a full choice-based lettings system operational from May 2006.

CBL is part of the housing function retained by the council, and has now been in operation for 16 months. It is therefore felt timely to give this committee a report on what has been achieved, some of the lessons learned, and some of the analysis that has been carried out.

Members might also wish to see this review as an addition to their own Affordable Housing and Lettings Scheme Topic Group report of 15 May 2007

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) To note the report and the associated review.
- (b) To be aware of the analysis providing details of the experience of using the CBL system.
- (c) To endorse the action plan developed from those analyses.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Members gave approval to introduce a CBL scheme three years ago. Approval was further given for the then Housing Service to join the East London Lettings Company, ELLC. Founded by the London Borough of Newham, ELLC now consists of the London Boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge, Waltham Forest, Hackney, Havering, Southwark and the Corporation of London as well as Thurrock Council.
2. When the Council's Arms Length Management Organisation, Homes in Havering, ALMO – HiH, was set up in July 2006, the lettings function remained with the retained housing service. CBL has now been in operation for 16 months.
3. Attached as an annex to this report is a review of the first 16 months of the scheme's operation. It provides information on applicants' experiences in using CBL, as well as helping to understand why some applicants do not use the facility.
4. Overall, the experience of users has been positive: 99% of people housed through CBL said that the system was easy to use and 96% thought that the viewing process was good.
5. The year's experience of operating a CBL system has enabled us to identify issues that are being addressed, and an action plan is included in the review.

Financial Implications and risks:

The 2007/08 HRA budget for our membership of ELLC is £102,000, in line with the original committee report. This includes the annual fee of £30,000 and allows for the differential costs of advertising a varying number of properties within the weekly issues of the magazine. Continued membership of ELLC is currently open-ended.

CBL has contributed to the void reduction time of 111 days in 2004/05 to 26 days in 2006/07, so increasing the amount of rent that can be collected.'

Legal Implications and risks:

This report should be seen as a follow-up to the original approval by members to introduce a choice based lettings system within Housing, and as an addition to this committee's topic group report on Affordable Housing and Lettings.

Human Resources Implications and risks:

None arising directly from this report.

Equalities and Social Inclusion Implications and risks:

The body of the review attached to this report includes an analysis of some of the demographics of housing applicants. As the scheme matures and the number of applicants increases it is likely that further meaningful analysis can be made.

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CHERYL COPPELL
Chief Executive

Background Papers List

Review of Choice-based lettings (attached)

London Borough of Havering

Housing and Environmental
Health Services

Review of
Choice-based Lettings

June 2007



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1. Background to choice-based lettings in Havering

1.1 Introduction of choice-based lettings in Havering

As a result of the Government's Green Paper on housing published in 2000, Quality and Choice, a decent home for all which first raised the issue of offering more choice and also the Homelessness Act 2002 which identified that Havering's allocations policy was not fully compliant with current legislation. It was therefore necessary to change the allocations policy and the way in which vacant accommodation was offered to applicants on the housing register.

Approval to introduce a choice based lettings scheme was passed by Members three years ago. It was decided at that time that there would be a twofold approach to this implementation.

The first stage would be to introduce a new lettings policy which would be compliant with legislation and this was brought into effect in April 2005.

The second stage would be to introduce a choice based lettings system giving applicants a greater choice over the area and type of accommodation in which they were to live.

After considerable research approval was granted the London Borough of Havering's Housing Service be to join the East London Lettings Company - a company established purely for a choice based lettings scheme working in partnership at that time with the London Boroughs of Barking & Dagenham, Redbridge, Waltham Forest, Newham (the founder member who received funding from central government to set up a choice based lettings scheme) Southwark and the Corporation of London.

The London Borough of Hackney have since joined the company along with London and Quadrant Housing Association. This second stage came into effect in May 2006. It should be noted that both the new lettings policy and the introduction of choice based lettings were both implemented on time.

It is also worth noting that prior to the launch of our choice based lettings scheme, seminars were held to introduce the new scheme and explain how it would work . Staff from all relevant areas within the council were invited as well as staff from voluntary agencies.

The Novalet system, (the IT system for CBL) has been relatively easy to use and both staff and customers appear have adjusted well to this new scheme.

1.2 Review of the choice-based lettings system

This report analysis our review of twelve months of operating a choice-based lettings system incorporating the advertising of properties and 'bidding' by interested applicants – see section 2 for more details of how the system operates in Havering.

This review draws on data from:

- the survey of service users conducted by the East London Lettings Company, ELLC – the operators of the systems we use – produced in October 2006

- monitoring information from our ICT systems
- a review of 193 people on our Housing Register conducted specifically for this review
- national reviews in choice-based lettings.

2. Operation of choice-based lettings in Havering

Since the introduction of the choice based lettings scheme the number of days taken to let vacant properties has been drastically reduced. As at the end of year 2005/6 the number of days taken was 42. The target for the following year was set at 36 and the actual figure for end of year 2006/7 was 26 - a full 10 days below target.

There are currently some 4,520 applications on the Housing register.

2.1 Advertising vacant properties

Vacant properties are advertised weekly through:

the East London's Letting Company's website

- the Choice Homes Magazine – our magazine collection points have made it comparatively easy for those without internet access to get hold of a copy of the magazine
- property advertisements, A4 size, displayed in the window of Romford Library during the bidding cycle – giving 24/7 access to property information for those without access to the Internet
- a copy of the Havering pages of the magazine sent to all libraries, supported housing schemes across the borough, Homes in Havering, homeless hostels, the Circle Anglia housing office on the Mardyke Estate and the three Tenant Management Organisations, Beta, Petra and Delta.

Already as part of this review the magazine distribution has changed. Initially 200 magazines were delivered to each distribution point; Elm Park Library, Central Library, Harold Hill Library and Collier Row Library. (with 50 magazines being collected by the lettings team from Harold Hill Library for sending out by post and a further 25 collected from Romford Library for distribution in the PASC

The review highlighted that Elm Park library at Elm Park always had over 100 copies left, whilst the other libraries were just about right.

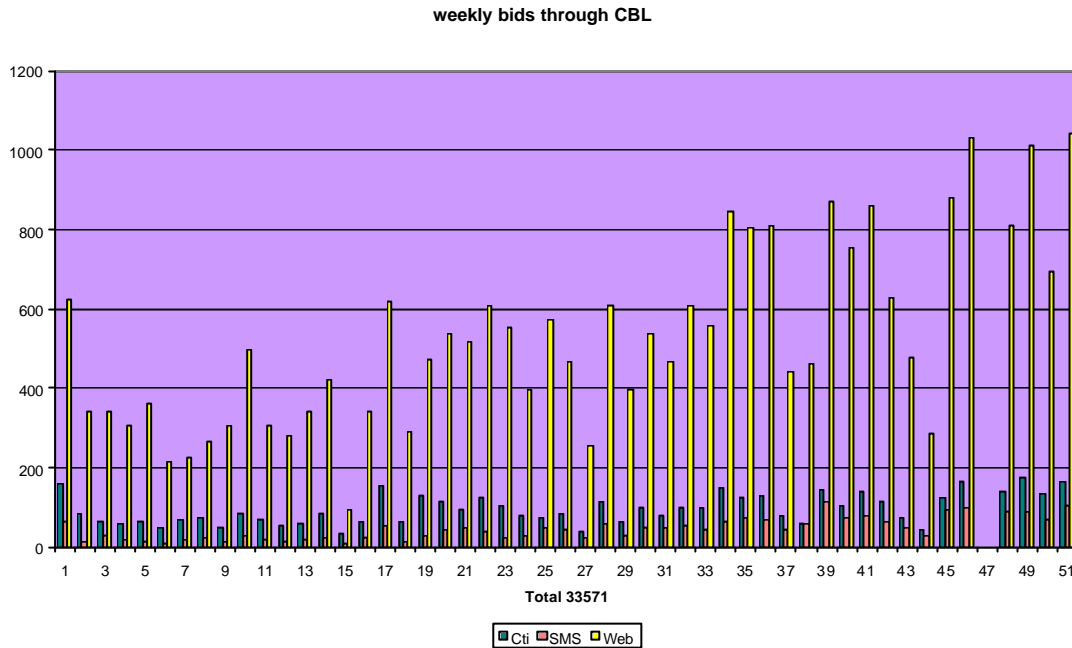
It has now been arranged for the distribution company to deliver 100 less copies of the magazine to Elm Park library and to deliver 100 extra copies to Central Library. The Lettings Team collect these 100 only from Romford and use them to post copies out to people who have requested them with the remaining copies being distributed to the PASC.

However, Romford library is experiencing a high level of demand for the magazine as well as the PASC . This situation will be monitored and if it is demonstrated that there is a need to increase the supply this will be given consideration. However this would lead to an increase in costs in the Choice Based Lettings Scheme which has not been budgeted for.

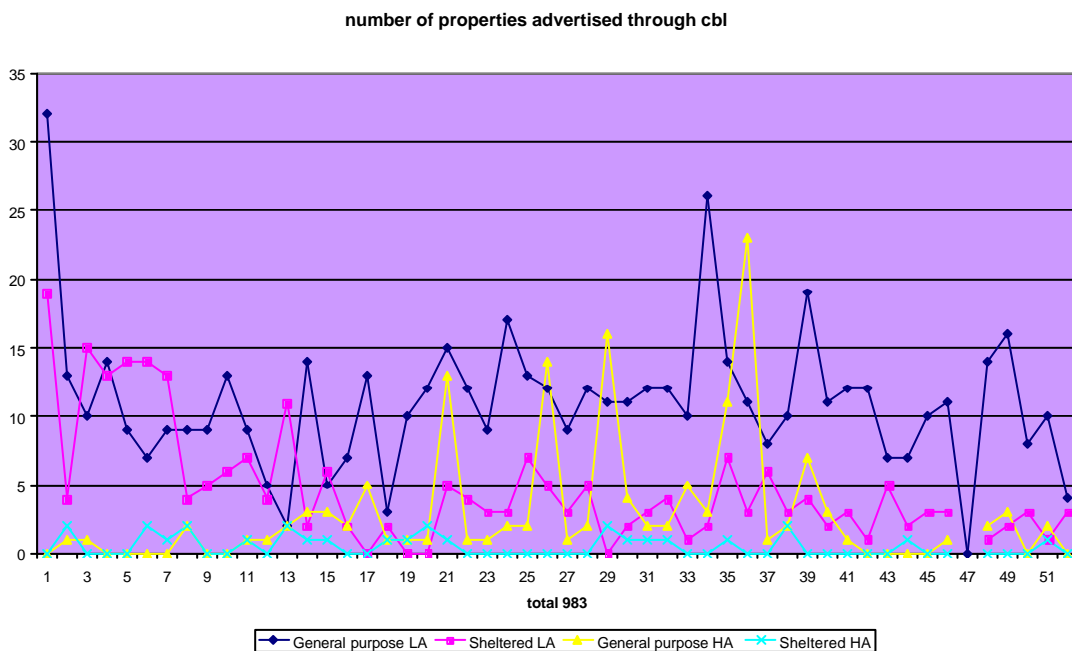
A possible solution to this increased demand rather than increasing the supply of the magazine would be to reproduce our own pages in the magazine and make these available when the magazines run out. We will also look to having a static display of properties (similar to that in Romford Library) in the Public Advice and Service Centre in Romford.

2.2 Bidding for properties

To date more than 978 properties have been advertised through CBL and on average over 650 people are placing bids each week. The following charts detail the number of bids placed and the properties advertised



The bidding methods are by telephone (an automated system, cti), by text messaging (sms) or by accessing the internet web site (web). There is also built into the novalet system the capability for housing staff to place automatic bids for those applicants who due to exceptional circumstances are unable to do so themselves.



In Havering the majority of applicants placing bids, do so via the internet.

Type of bid	Average weekly count
Via Website	529
Telephone	96
Text message	45
Total average weekly bids	671

Note: The above is an average figure. There have for example been several weeks where over 1000 people have bid on-line.

In a survey carried out by the East London Lettings Company (ELLC) last year, the majority of their respondents said they would prefer to bid by telephone, however across all boroughs the majority of people bid on-line.

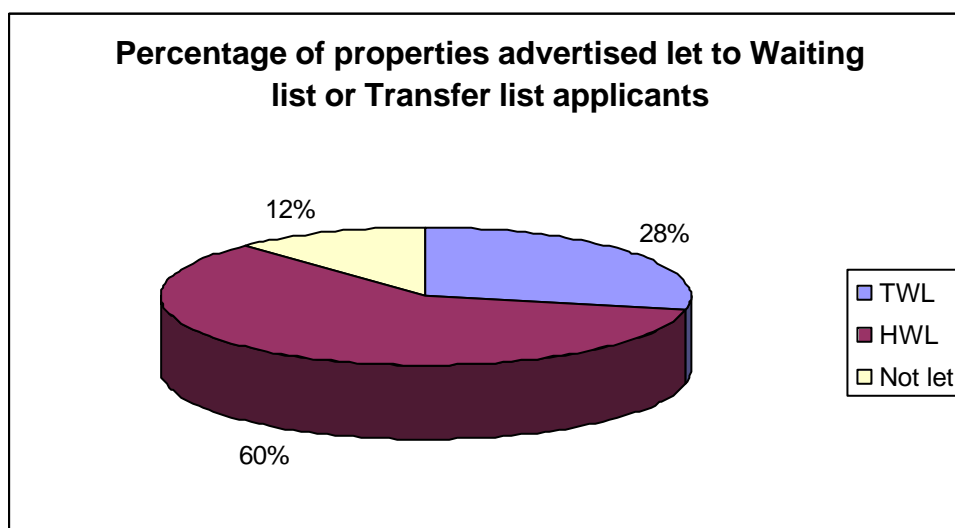
70% of the ELLC survey respondents said they bid every week.

2.3 Analysis of lettings

A total of 978 adverts have been placed in the Choice Homes magazine and website.

There is a good balance between properties let to transfer applicants and to housing waiting list applicants.

The breakdown of the adverts is as follows:



Note: This table shows the number of adverts, not the number of properties, so in the Property not let category, the same property could have been re-advertised later.

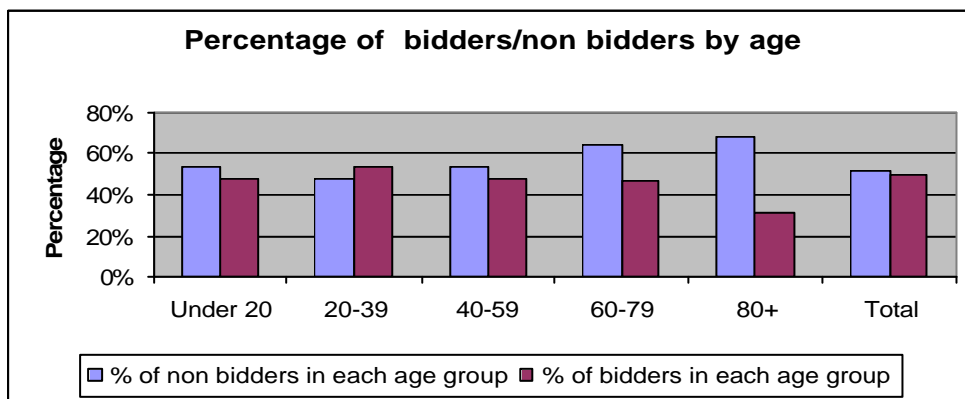
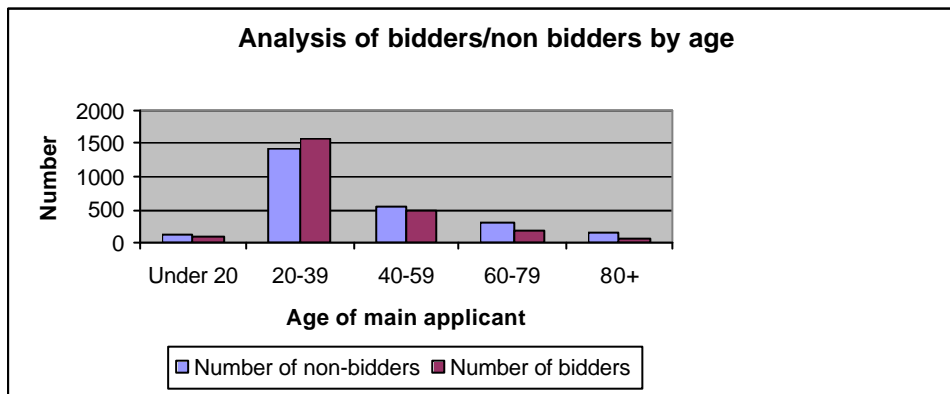
The following table gives an analysis of lettings by individual bands. This shows a good balanced distribution of properties across the bands and is in line with what was anticipated by housing staff when the scheme was first introduced.

Band of successful applicant	Number of people in Band	Number of people successful	% of people in band who were successful
A	95	56	52%
B	210	134	58%
C	2223	425	17%
D	921	48	4%
E	1195	30	2%
Total	4644	693	15%

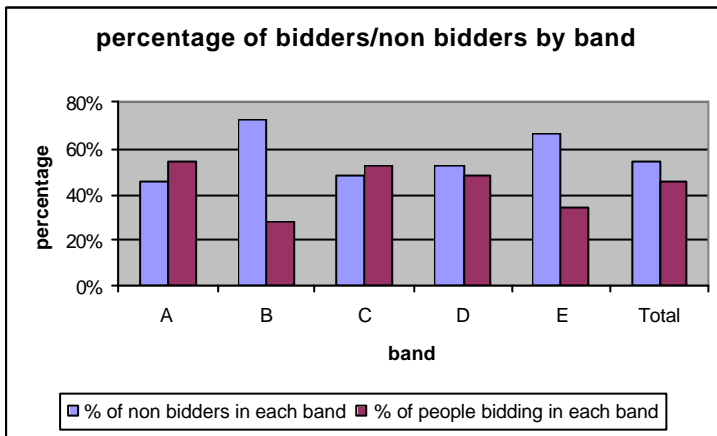
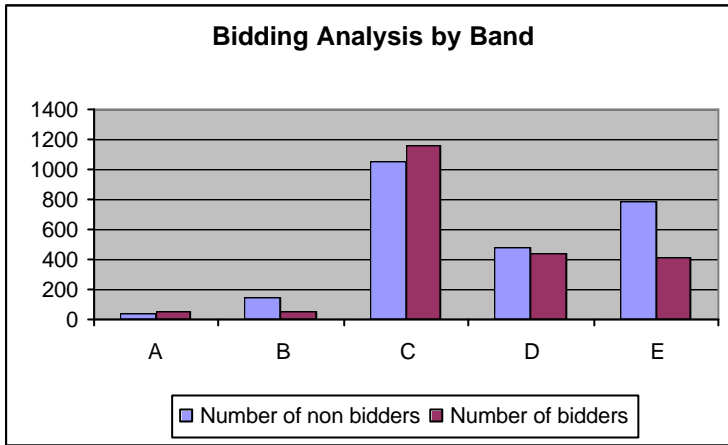
2.4 Analysis of non-bidders

There are 2,514 people on the Housing Register who have not yet made a bid for a property.

The following graphs demonstrate the age breakdown of bidders and non-bidders.



The band breakdown of the non-bidders is as follows:



As part of this review, a survey of applicants was carried out. As part of the survey of those on the Housing Register, a question was asked about reasons for not bidding. The survey found that of the non-bidders:

- 14% of people no longer needed Council Housing
- 20% of people said there were no properties they liked
- 27% of people said they did not know where to get the magazine
- 30% of people said they would like more information
- 28% of people said they would like help to bid, but they didn't give any ideas of how we could provide this help.

In view of the high number of non bidders it is recommended that a letter should be sent out to remind applicants that if they require housing, it is their responsibility to place bids for vacant properties and to enquire at the same time if they are still in need of housing. If they no longer require housing their application can be removed from the Housing Register.

2.5 Older and vulnerable people's experience of choice-based lettings

Elderly or vulnerable people are able to get the Choice Homes magazine posted to them if they cannot get to a library to collect it or are unable to access the internet. However, one person surveyed said they don't receive the magazine until Tuesday, so it is too late for them to place a bid. The magazines are posted out first class on a Friday so they should be received on Saturday morning or at the latest on Monday morning. The Lettings Team will ensure that the magazines are posted out in time

If this client group need help with bidding, they may find this difficult to get as they may not know who to ask. However the Lettings Team will ensure that details of who to contact for assistance is incorporated into the registration letter.

On consulting the Supported Housing Team, it appears that they often get people asking them, or their warden, to bid for them. However this information does not appear to have been relayed to the Lettings Team.

If there was a shop-front service dealing with choice-based lettings in Havering, elderly or vulnerable people could visit and receive advice on the housing options available to them and get help to bid. There could be training sessions for people so they could drop in and make a bid whilst receiving training on how to do it. They will then become more confident in bidding independently.

Housebound or disabled applicants could have a visit from a member of the Lettings team to provide a brief training session in the person's home to explain all the bidding methods.

We could also roll out further training to other services who deal with vulnerable groups, to raise awareness of potential problems their clients may experience, so they too can provide assistance.

The survey revealed an elderly customer who had not bid because they thought the bidding hotline was expensive as it is an 0845 number. In fact this is a low-call number and is cheap to call. The average price of a call could be added to future publicity. This information could also be added to the initial registration letter received by the applicants when their application has been registered.

Some sheltered accommodation/supported accommodation has been hard to let, for example the bedsit/studio units. However this situation is not unique to Havering and is in fact the case across the country and most councils are finding it increasingly difficult to let these type of properties. However housing is proactively dealing with this issue and specific schemes of low demand have been identified for alternative use and a major decant scheme is in operation in the borough.

The Supported Housing Team were concerned about the older people who are trying to get into supported accommodation. They feel that if they were more involved in letting this type of accommodation they would be able to provide more help for people who need it.

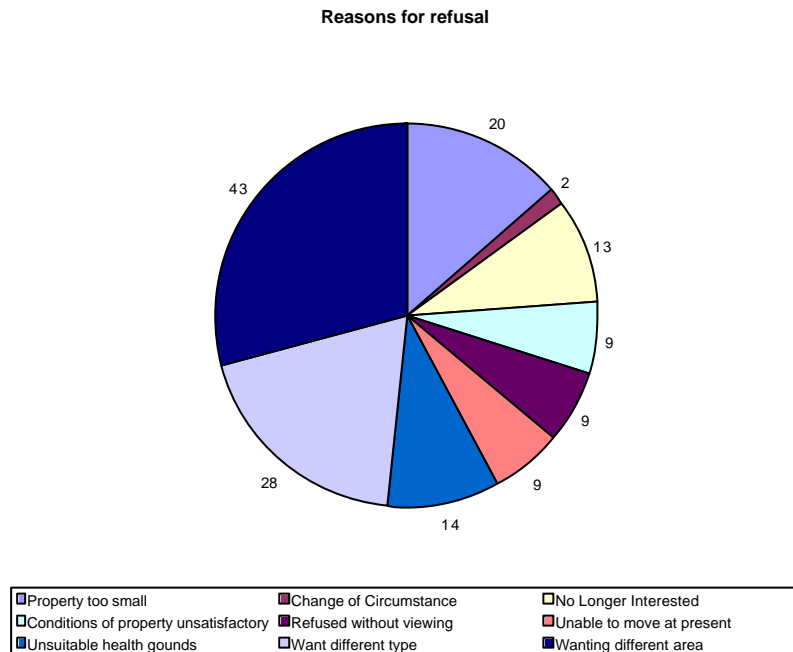
When the Supported Housing staff carry out their assessments to see if the applicant is suitable for supported housing, they are able to assess the person's ability to understand the Choice based lettings system and make a bid. Sometimes, they are aware of problems which will prevent the person from bidding and they can then notify the Lettings Team. As previously stated with cases such as this the Lettings Team will either make a direct offer or more appropriately place an automatic bid for the person.

2.6 Refusal of offers

Since CBL was launched in May 2006, there have been 145 refusals. The current Lettings Policy states that if an offer is refused by an applicant and this refusal is not considered justified, their application will be suspended from the bidding process for a period of 6 months.

The refusals are for many varied reasons. All refusals are looked at on an individual basis and assessed by the lettings officers before any decisions/actions are taken as a result of the refusal. If an applicant is suspended there is an appeals process identified within the policy. An appeal is sent to the Lettings Manager who will review the case.

The following chart shows the number and reasons for the 145 refusals



It may be possible to further reduce the level of refusals by having available a more detailed description of the void properties and also giving additional useful information regarding the surrounding area. This should be available both on-line and at magazine distribution points. This could include internal photographs, floor layouts and typical room sizes, it could also include photographs of communal areas and details of nearby facilities including bus routes, schools and shops and such like. If applicants have a better understanding of the property advertised, the area and local amenities, it will hopefully lead to fewer properties being refused.

We believe that by having a refusal policy this is instrumental in keeping the void turnaround figure down although we have no hard evidence to substantiate this view.

However the Communities and Local Government published a draft code guidance on choice based lettings in January 2007 in which reference was made to the fact that penalties should not be automatically imposed for refusals and that as much information as possible about the advertised property should be made available to applicants so as to prevent applicants bidding for properties which do not meet their needs.

We have contacted our partners in the East London Sub Region who have confirmed they do not impose penalties for refusals. However this is mainly due to the fact that they carry out multiple viewings on offers and therefore do not actually record any refusals. Multiple viewings has not been introduced into Havering but it is certainly an area to be explored over the coming months with our colleagues in Homes in Havering especially as it could improve the void turnaround figure even further.

Taking into accounts the Government's views of refusal it is planned to amend our policy, for a trial period, to allow applicants to make two refusals before their application is suspended.

2.7 The Anite / Novalet interface

There are a few problems with the extract file that goes from Anite to Novalet which cause operational difficulties.

- a. Priority for a garden is give to people who have children under 16. The extract reflects the age being a maximum of 18 years. This needs to be changed.
- b. There is a possibility that someone may want to down-size for example from a 4 bedroom property to a 2 bedroom property. They would be allowed to bid for a property with a garden, even if they had no children as an incentive to free up a 4 bedroom property. There is no over-ride for this.
- c. To advertise a property, a tick is placed in a check box to say 'ready to advertise'. The properties that are ticked are then extracted overnight into Novalet. The next day, the tick has to be removed, or the property will be extracted again overnight. Ideally, the tick should be automatically removed or have a date linked to it.

3. Recommendations and Action Plan

The recommendations stemming from this review are summarised in the table below along with the required actions, lead officer and deadlines. Given the close partnership with Homes in Havering required to make a success of choice-based lettings, some actions have, in consultation, been delegated to Homes in Havering officers.

Recommendation	Action	Lead officer	Deadline
<i>Improve access to choice-based lettings</i>			
In order to improve access for older and vulnerable people, make introductory telephone calls to ensure the person understands the system and ask if the person needs assistance with the bidding process	Introductory phone calls by the Lettings Team	Liz Mason	July 2007 onwards
Demonstrate to applicants how to fully use choice-based lettings	Provide demonstration of website at HiH's shop-front office	Carol Burton, HiH	From August 2007
Establish a shop-front service to assist applicants use the choice-based lettings systems	Homes in Havering to establish shop-front service in Farnham Road, Harold Hill	Carol Burton, HiH	August 2007
Establish a shop-front service to assist applicants use the choice-based lettings systems and provide full range of housing options advice	Display 'estate agency' style property information at the PASC	Liz Mason	August 2007
	Reconfigure the PASC to provide greater access to the choice-based lettings system	Liz Mason	September 2008
<i>Improve publicity about the service and the benefits of the system used, and encourage use of the system</i>			
Greater publicity about choice-based lettings, especially offering personal advice and support	Letter to all those on the Housing Register offering more support	Liz Mason	August 2007
	Stall at Havering Show	Carol Burton, HiH	August 2007
	Advertise in 'Living in Havering' magazine	Liz Mason	At least annually from Autumn 2007
	Advertise service in 'At the Heart' newsletter	Carol Burton, HiH	Autumn 2007
	Provide home visits to older / vulnerable people	Liz Mason	September 2007
	Provide demonstration of website at the PASC	Liz Mason	September 2008
Target information at non-bidders to increase their use of the system. This should include information about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> where to get training on how to bid the housing stock and 	Letter to all non-bidders offering advice	Liz Mason	August 2007

Recommendation	Action	Lead officer	Deadline
	Evaluate whether information provided to non-bidders leads to more bidding and repeat / amend publicity as necessary	Liz Mason	November 2007
<i>Improve information provided to applicants through the choice-based lettings system</i>			
More information on vacant properties to be provided through choice-based lettings system	Advertise size of bedrooms	Liz Mason	June 2007
	Make available to all those on the Housing Register information on the availability of different types and sizes of properties in the borough	Liz Mason	August 2007
	Advertise more detailed information, including internal layouts, floor plans, internal pictures, virtual tours and the like	Liz Mason and Carol Burton, HiH	Introduce more information as available from April 2008
<i>Update partners on choice-based lettings systems</i>			
Update partner Council services / other agencies in how assist clients use choice-base lettings	Update Homes in Havering	Liz Mason	June 2007
	Draw up a training programme to ensure annual updates for all partners	Liz Mason	Training programme in place by October 2007 Annual training updates from 2008 onwards
<i>Keep all elements of choice-based lettings under review</i>			
Review policy of applicants refusing properties	Amend policy to give applicants up to two suitable offers before suspension of bidding	Liz Mason	July 2007
	Explore other partner boroughs' approaches to balancing refusals with minimising relet times, and survey applicants' views	Liz Mason and Lucy Scamans, HiH	September 2007
	Make recommendations regarding refusal policy if required following review	Liz Mason	October 2007
<i>Ensure equality of access to and use of choice-based lettings</i>			
Continue to conduct ethnic analysis of lettings	Compare the split of offers and those of the	Jonathan Geall	Twice yearly – end of quarter

Recommendation	Action	Lead officer	Deadline
	Housing Register between ethnic groups on a twice yearly basis		2 and quarter 4
Check whether applicants and transfers are receiving their share of offers in proportion to their respective share of the Housing Register	Compare the split of offers and those of the Housing Register between applicants and transfers	Liz Mason and Lucy Scamans, HiH	August 2007
	Bring forward recommendations for policy amendments based on this analysis if required	Liz Mason	September 2007

Appendix A: Summary of survey results

People who have not made a bid

- 14% of people no longer needed Council Housing
- 20% of people said there were no properties they liked
- 27% of people said they did not know where to get the magazine
- 30% of people said they would like more information
- 28% of people said they would like help to bid, but they didn't give any ideas of how we could provide this help.

People Housed by Choice Based Lettings

- 96% of people interviewed said the viewing process was good.
- 99% of people said the choice based lettings system was easy to use.
- 94% of people said they CBL system was good or excellent.
- 29% of people looked for properties regularly in the magazine, and 54% looked on the website.
- 10% of people interviewed used the library displays to look for properties
- 100% of people said they had bid regularly before being successful, but 57% of the people interviewed made 5 bids or less before being successful

People surveyed at the Lettings Desk in the Public Advice and Service Centre

- 54% of people knew and understood the choice based lettings system
- 90% of people who had seen the magazine thought it was good or excellent
- 100% of people who had seen the website thought it was good or excellent

Appendix B: Property analysis

Lettings Analysis

Of the properties advertised through Choice Homes, the following lets have resulted.

Properties let, by area

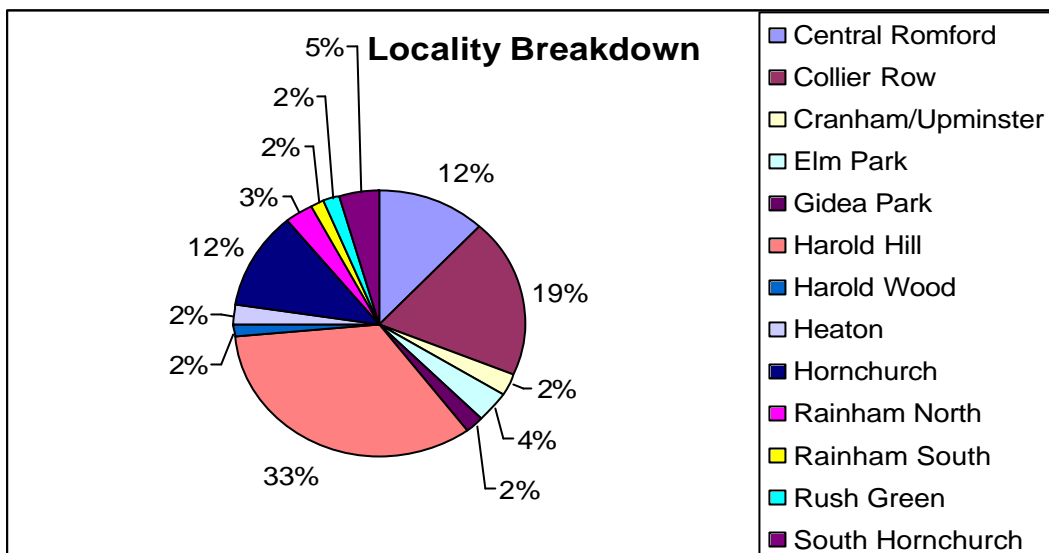
Area	Number of properties let	Total stock in area	% of stock in area let
Central Romford	74	582	13%
Collier Row	139	1556	9%
Cranham/ Upminster	11	287	4%
Elm Park	29	537	5%
Gidea Park	12	255	5%
Harold Hill	250	2446	10%
Harold Wood	12	684	2%
Heaton	19	1698	1%
Hornchurch	71	931	8%
Rainham	32	165	19%
Rush Green	14	555	3%
South Hornchurch	29	1126	3%
	692	10822	6%

Properties let, by bedroom size

Bedroom size	Number of properties let	Total stock	% of stock let
0	25	674	4%
1	287	3178	9%
2	266	3802	7%
3	108	3020	4%
4	6	145	4%
5	0	3	0%
	692	10822	6%

Letting Analysis

This chart show the area of the properties that have been advertised.



The following table shows the number of properties let by area and as a percentage of the stock

Area	Number of properties let	Total stock in area	% of stock in area let
Central Romford	74	582	13%
Collier Row	139	1556	9%
Cranham/ Upminster	11	287	4%
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	692	10822	6%

Percentage of lettings by band

